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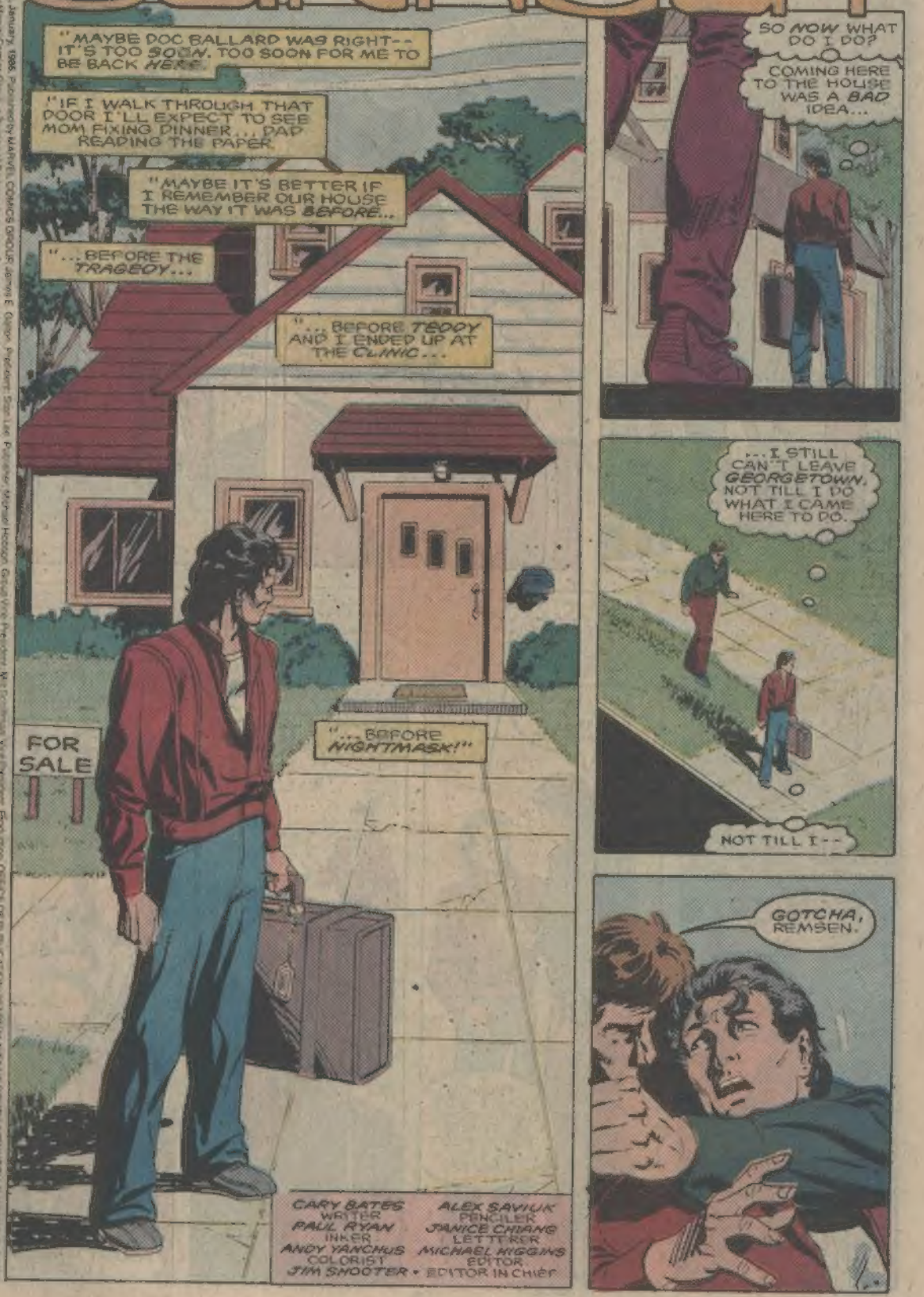
BURNOUT


"MAYBE DOC BALLARD WAS RIGHT-- IT'S TOO SOON. TOO SOON FOR ME TO BE BACK HERE.
"IF I WALK THROUGH THAT DOOR I'LL EXPECT TO SEE MOM FIXING DINNER... DAD READING THE PAPER.
"MAYBE IT'S BETTER IF I REMEMBER OUR HOUSE THE WAY IT WAS BEFORE...
"...BEFORE THE TRAGEDY...
"...BEFORE TEDDY AND I ENDED UP AT THE CLINIC...
"...BEFORE NIGHTMASK!"
FOR SALE
SO NOW WHAT DO I DO?
COMING HERE TO THE HOUSE WAS A BAD IDEA...
...I STILL CAN'T LEAVE GEORGETOWN, NOT TILL I DO WHAT I CAME HERE TO DO.
NOT TILL I--
GOTCHA, REMSEN.
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DAN! DAN BRODY!

HEY, GUY, I WAS JUST *THINKIN'* ABOUT YOU.

SURE YOU WERE, REMSEN.

HOW'VE YOU BEEN, MAN. I HEARD YOU'D BE AROUND.

YOU'RE LOOKIN' GOOD. GOOD FOR A SCRAWNY 120 POUND *RUNT*, I MEAN.

140 POUNDS.

THE KID'S BEEN WORKING OUT.

COULDN'T HURT.

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN YOU SINCE THE... THE *ACCIDENT*.

I'M REAL SORRY, MAN.

I REALLY LIKED YOUR *FOLKS*. WE *ALL* DID. THEY WERE A PAIR, THOSE TWO. SOMETHING *SPECIAL*.

I *MISS* THEM. MORE THAN I CAN EVER SAY.

BUT WHAT ABOUT *YOUR* NEXT *FALL*? LAST I HEARD FIVE DIFFERENT SCHOOLS HAD SCHOLARSHIPS WITH YOUR NAME ON--

YEAH, WELL. LET'S TALK ANOTHER TIME.

RIGHT NOW, I GOT BUSINESS IN TOWN THAT JUST WON'T *WAIT*!

YOU'LL BE AROUND A FEW DAYS, RIGHT?

MAYBE I'LL SWING BY THIS WAY AGAIN TOMORROW. WE'LL GO OUT FOR A PIZZA OR SOMETHIN'.

LATER, MAN.

UH, SURE, LATER.

HE PUT UP A GOOD FRONT. BUT *DAN* AND ME, WE GO *BACK* TOO FAR... I KNOW HIM TOO *WELL*.

ONE OF HIS *HANDS* WAS SHAKING. HE WAS *WIRED*.

WHAT I *HEARD* ABOUT HIM... MAYBE IT *IS* TRUE.

...SO THE FIRST NARC SAYS TO HIS PARTNER, "OH MAN, I THOUGHT YOU WERE THE DOPE!"
GET IT? I THOUGHT YOU WERE THE--
THE STUFF, DEV. HERE'S YOUR BREAD, JUST GIMME THE STUFF!

SHEESH! SOME PEOPLE GOT NO SENSE OF HUMOR THESE--
DEVLIN--
SMOKESTAK

BRODY. DIDN'T FIGURE I'D SEE YOU AGAIN SO SOON...
CUT THE BULL.
YOU KNOW WHAT I WANT...

WHAT YOU NEED...
THAT'S WHAT I'M HERE FOR, BRODY.

TO MAKE SURE MY CUSTOMERS GET WHAT THEY NEED.
YOUR USUAL "PRESCRIPTION"?
YEAH. THAT'S ALL THE CASH I GOT RIGHT NOW.

THEN THAT'S ALL THE PRETTY REDS YOU GET RIGHT NOW.

I'LL BE BACK.
NO PROBLEM.
WE'RE ALWAYS OPEN.

I GUESS I STILL HAD TO SEE FOR MYSELF... BEFORE I REALLY BELIEVED IT.
DAN'S STRUNG-OUT, ALL RIGHT. HE'S GOT A HABIT.
BUT HE'S NOT ALONE ANY MORE.

HE'S GOT ME.

I *FIGURED* THIS IS WHERE HE WAS HEADED-- HIS GIRL FRIEND *DEBBIE'S* HOUSE.

HE CAN'T GO *HOME* ZONKED-OUT ON DRUGS... SO HE CRASHES AT *HER* PLACE WHILE SHE'S AWAY AT WORK.

JUST IN TIME, TOO. THE *DOWNERS* HE TOOK JUST KICKED IN.

HE'S OUT OF IT... *WAY* OUT.

IT TEARS ME UP TO *SEE* HIM LIKE THIS.

I *OWE* THAT GUY SO *MUCH*. HE WAS LIKE A BIG BROTHER TO ME ALL THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL.

EVER SINCE THE MORNING WE *FIRST MET*...

"... WHEN I WAS JUST A DUMB FRESHMEN SOME SENIORS DECIDED TO USE FOR A *BEANBAG*, ONE DAY..."

"... AND *DAN* STEPPED IN AND SHOWED ALL THREE OF THEM WHY *HE* WAS THE STAR TACKLE ON THE FOOTBALL TEAM."

"YEAH, I *OWE* THAT GUY..."

...AND MAYBE *NIGHT-MASK* CAN SETTLE MY DEBT...

WITH *DAN* ASLEEP JUST A FEW FEET AWAY FROM ME... I'M *CLOSE* ENOUGH TO SENSE THE PRESENCE OF *DREAM ACTIVITY* COURSING THROUGH HIS *SUBCONSCIOUS*.

A LITTLE *MORE* CONCENTRATION AND I OUGHT TO BE ABLE TO USE MY PARANORMAL ABILITIES TO *FOCUS* ON DAN'S SPECIFIC DREAM *FREQUENCY*--

--WHILE I LAY BACK AND MEDITATE--

--UNTIL MY MIND CAN *TUNE IN* TO THE *FLOW* OF HIS *DREAM*-- AND THEN *GO* WITH IT--

--NO MATTER *WHERE* IT *TAKES* ME...

"WHY DO I FEEL LIKE I'M *FREE-FLOATING?*"

"NO... WEIGHTLESS, THAT'S WHAT IT IS. I'M *WEIGHTLESS!*"

"THERE'S *NO GRAVITY* HERE--

"--BUT WHERE'S *HERE?*"

HELMSMAN--120 DEGREES HARD TO PORT!

AYE AYE, SIR.

THE LAST PHOTON BOLT, SIR--IT DAMAGED OUR AFT LIFE-SUPPORT SYSTEMS.

WE'VE LOST ARTIFICIAL GRAVITY IN DECKS 4B AND 5F.

MY FINAL WARNING, CAPTAIN.

I WILL GRANT YOU 10 MORE OF YOUR MINUTES TO AGREE TO AN UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER OF YOUR CRAFT AND CREW.

ZREE

ZREE

ZREE

ZREE

NOW WHAT?!

ZREE

ZREE

INTRA-SENSORS INDICATE AN *INTRUDER* HAS MATERIALIZED ON DECK 4B!

4B...?

"ISN'T THAT *ENSIGN BRODY'S* SECTION?"

GOT YOU, SUCKER!

HEYYYY!

I THOUGHT THAT CHOKE-HOLD FELT FAMILIAR!

IT'S DAN!

LOOKS LIKE HE'S A CREWMAN ABOARD THIS SPACESHIP-- BUT WHY IS HE ATTACKING ME?

YOUR MARKINGS--YOUR STRANGE UNIFORM-- YOU'RE ONE OF VALKOR'S MINIONS!

UH...OKAY, OKAY. YOU GOT ME!

HAVE TO PLAY ALONG FOR NOW--GO WITH THE FLOW OF THE DREAM AND SEE WHERE IT LEADS.

I SEE YOU INTERCEPTED THE INTRUDER, ENSIGN. GOOD WORK, SON.

AN ALIEN!

BUT HOW DID HE PENETRATE THE SHIP'S DEFENSES?

I BELIEVE VALKOR TELEPORTED HIM ABOARD, SIR. MY HUNCH IS HE WAS ORDERED TO SABOTAGE OUR DEFENSES.

THIS IS GETTING REALLY WEIRD. DAN MAY NOT BE CONSCIOUSLY AWARE OF IT...

...BUT IN THE ROLE OF THIS STARSHIP'S CAPTAIN HE'S CAST SOMEONE NEAR AND DEAR TO HIS LIFE!

TAKE HIM TO THE BRIG, ENSIGN. IF WE SURVIVE THIS ENCOUNTER INTACT--

--WE'LL SUBJECT HIM TO A BRAIN-SWEEP AND THEN WE'LL KNOW ALL THAT HE KNOWS ABOUT VALKOR...

HE KNOWS NOTHING...

...FOR YOUR INTRUDER IS NOT OF VALKOR'S REALM!

BUT HIS TRUE NATURE WILL BE OF LITTLE CONSEQUENCE TO YOU AND YOUR CREW, CAPTAIN--

...NOT WHERE YOU'RE GOING! YOUR 10 MINUTES HAVE LAPSED!

CAPTAIN! WE'RE IN THE GRIP OF SOME SORT OF TRACTOR BEAM!

DIVERT ALL POWER TO THE MAIN THRUSTERS AND--

NO GOOD, SIR--

--VALKOR'S ENERGI-LOCK HAS NEUTRALIZED MOST OF OUR PRIMARY CIRCUITS!

UH OH. THIS IS NO DREAM DAN'S HAVING--IT'S A DOWN-AND-DIRTY NIGHTMARE...

...AND I HAVE A SINKING FEELING THE WORST IS YET TO COME!

WE'RE NO MORE ABLE TO FIGHT BACK THAN A FISH ON A HOOK, SIR.

VALKOR IS CALLING THE SHOTS FROM HERE ON OUT!

HELMSMAN--CALCULATE WHAT LAYS AHEAD ALONG THIS FORCED TRAJECTORY.

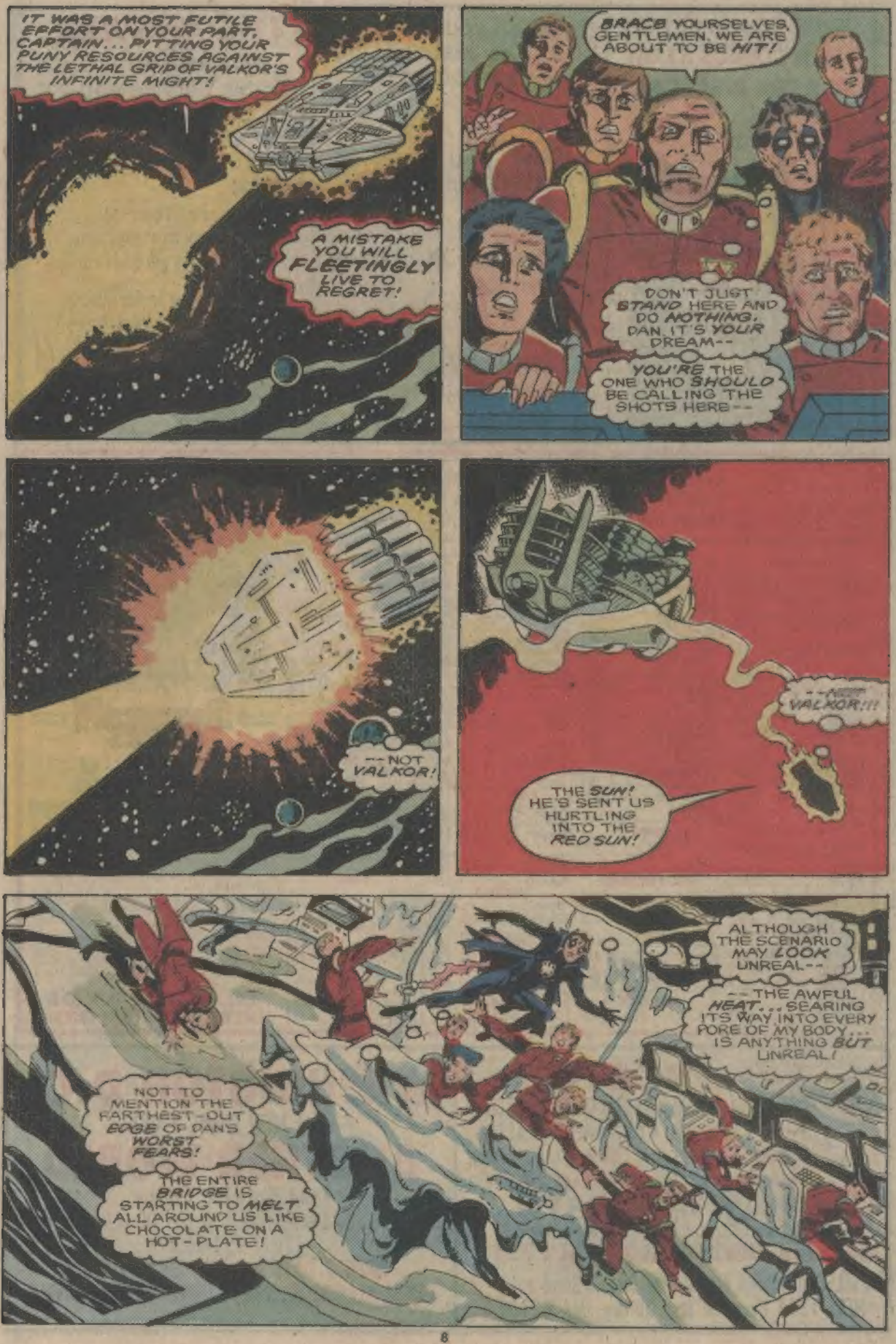
I'M NOT GOING TO LIKE THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION--NOT ONE BIT!

DAN, DAN, DAN! WHY ARE YOU TORTURING YOURSELF--ALL OF US--LIKE THIS?

ORNADO-5 DEAD-AHEAD, SIR.

A CLASS-7 RED GIANT. SURFACE TEMPERATURE 70,000--

THAT WILL SUFFICE, SCIENCE OFFICER.


IT WAS A MOST FUTILE EFFORT ON YOUR PART, CAPTAIN... PITTING YOUR PUNY RESOURCES AGAINST THE LETHAL GRIP OF VALKOR'S INFINITE MIGHT!
A MISTAKE YOU WILL FLEETINGLY LIVE TO REGRET!
BRACE YOURSELVES, GENTLEMEN. WE ARE ABOUT TO BE HIT!
DON'T JUST STAND HERE AND DO NOTHING, DAN. IT'S YOUR DREAM--
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SHOULD BE CALLING THE SHOTS HERE--
--NOT VALKOR!
--ALMOST VALKOR!!!
THE SUN! HE'S SENT US HURTLING INTO THE RED SUN!
ALTHOUGH THE SCENARIO MAY LOOK UNREAL--
--THE AWFUL HEAT... SEARING ITS WAY INTO EVERY PORE OF MY BODY... IS ANYTHING BUT UNREAL!
NOT TO MENTION THE FARTHEST-OUT EDGE OF DAN'S WORST FEARS!
THE ENTIRE BRIDGE IS STARTING TO MELT ALL AROUND US LIKE CHOCOLATE ON A HOT-PLATE!

CAPTAIN! THE CON IS MELTING OUT FROM UNDER ME!

THE FLAMES--

DON'T PANIC, ENSIGN-- I'LL PULL YOU OUT!

YOU SHOULD REFRAIN FROM MAKING SUCH IDLE PROMISES TO THE YOUNG MAN, CAPTAIN--

--PROMISES YOU DO NOT HAVE THE POWER TO KEEP!

FOOOSHH

ARRGHHHHH!

I HAVE THE POWER.

THE POWER TO BRING ALL OTHER BEINGS TO THEIR KNEES BEFORE ME!

THIS VESSEL IS DOOMED. ENSIGN BRODY HAS INSPIRED ME TO DEVISE A MOST EXCRUCIATING DOOM FOR ALL OF YOU UNFORTUNATE ENOUGH--

--TO BE ALONG FOR THE RIDE!

IF I COULD JUST GET THROUGH TO DAN--

THERE'S NO ESCAPE! WE'RE ALL GONNA FRY!

--FIND A WAY TO CONVINCE HIM THIS NIGHTMARISH SCENARIO WAS SPAWNED BY HIS OWN DEEPLY TROUBLED SUBCONSCIOUS!

IT'S HIS OWN BURIED FEARS THAT ARE "DOOMING" THIS SHIP!

I'M NOT BEARING UP UNDER THIS HELLISH HEAT.. ANY BETTER THAN . THE REST OF THE CREW!
EVEN IF I HAD A PILOT'S LICENSE FOR THIS SHIP.
THE ODDS ARE I COULDN'T CHANGE COURSE ANY MORE THAN I COULD CHANGE THE INEVITABLE!
WHATEVER I -
UH OH
THE REST OF THIS CREW ARE JUST PLAYERS IN DAN'S NIGHTMARE--
THEY 'DIE' ONLY IN THE REALM OF HIS IMAGINATION
BUT ME-- I'M AN INTRUDER
--AND A HUMAN FRENCH FRY. FOR REAL IF I'M NOT OUTA HERE...
.. BEFORE THIS SHIP TURNS TO VAPOR!

:WHEW:

I WAS AFRAID OF THIS

JUST BEFORE I MADE MY *EXIT* I COULD SENSE DAN WAS *WAKING UP* FROM HIS NIGHTMARE.

HE'S *GONE* ALREADY

BEFORE HE GETS THE URGE TO *SLEEP* AGAIN-- AND WHO KNOWS WHEN *THAT* COULD BE I HAVE *WORK* TO DO

IF I M[illegible]NNA BE ANY *HELP* AT ALL ..

" WHAT I NEED FIRST IS SOME *ANSWERS*!"

... TO BE QUITE HONEST, KEITH, WHEN I WROTE YOU AT THE INSTITUTE ABOUT DAN'S *PROBLEM*, ASKING YOU TO *COME DOWN* HERE - YOU WERE A *LAST RESORT*.

I I DON'T REALLY KNOW HOW I EXPECTED *YOU* TO *ACCOMPLISH* WHAT *I'VE* FAILED AT SO MISERABLY

YOU'RE BEING TOO ROUGH ON YOURSELF, MR BRODY. BELIEVE ME, DEEP DOWN DAN *KNOWS* YOU'VE DONE YOUR BEST TO *HELP*

TOO BAD I CAN'T TELL BRODY SENIOR *HE* WAS THE HEROIC STARSHIP CAPTAIN IN HIS SON'S *DREAM*.

I APPRECIATE YOUR SAYING THAT, KEITH I JUST WISH I HAD A REASON TO *BELIEVE* IT.

YOU'RE WELCOME TO LOOK AROUND HIS ROOM ALL YOU LIKE ..

BUT I WISH YOU WEREN'T BEING SO *MYSTERIOUS* OVER THIS "*NUNOM*" YOU SAY YOU HAVE ABOUT HOW TO SOLVE DAN'S PROBLEM

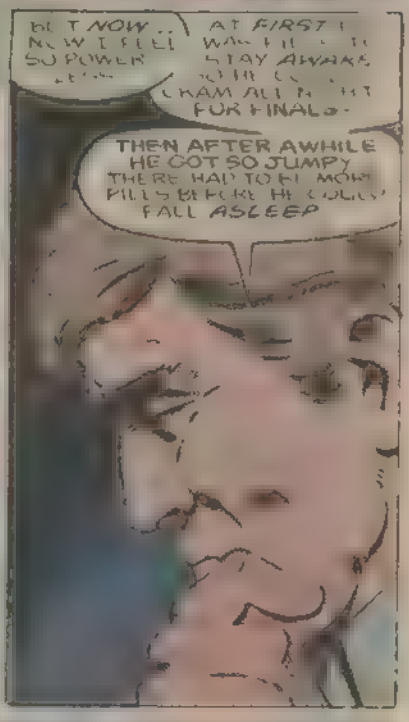
IT'S ONLY A LONG SHOT SIR SO FAR

BINGO! THE *S-F* POSTERS SUGGEST WHERE DAN'S SPACE-*BOUND* SCENARIO CAME FROM

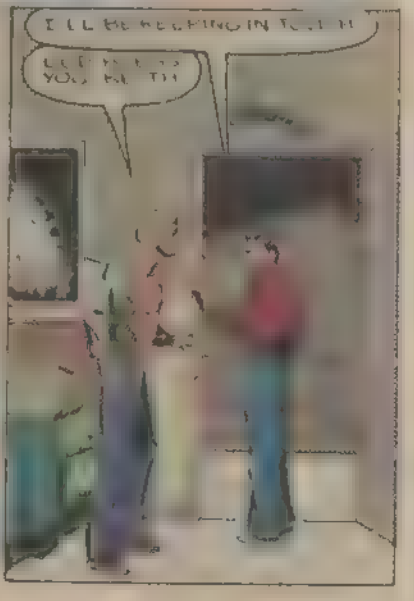
TELL ME, MR BRODY -- TO YOUR KNOWLEDGE, DID DAN EVER HAVE A TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE INVOLVING *FIRE*?
HOW DID YOU *KNOW*?
DAN NEVER BRINGS IT UP ANY MORE -- BUT YEARS AGO AT OUR PREVIOUS HOME THERE *WAS* A *FIRE*.
HE WAS ONLY *TEN* AT THE TIME.

D'ALEY?
IT'S OKAY, DANNY I'LL PULL YOU OUT!

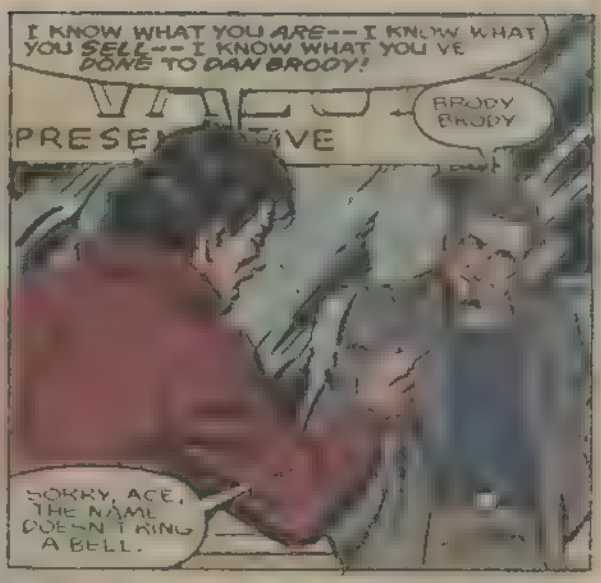
AS NIGHTMARISH AS *THAT* NIGHT WAS -- AT LEAST IT WAS *THERE* FOR MY SON
I AT LEAST *THEN* IT WAS IN MY POWER TO *SAVE* HIM"


BUT *NOW*.. NOW I FEEL SO POWER
AT *FIRST* I WAS ABLE TO *STAY AWAKE*
THEN AFTER AWHILE HE GOT SO JUMPY THERE HAD TO BE MORE PILLS BEFORE HE COULD FALL *ASLEEP*

BY THE TIME I REALIZED WHAT WAS GOING ON, IT WAS *TOO LATE*--
NOTHING I TRIED TO DO COULD GET *DAN* OFF HIMSELF DESTRUCTIVE TREADMILL ONCE THE *PILLS* TOOK OVER I'M AFRAID THEY'RE GOING TO BURN HIM *OUT*
LOOK, MR. BRODY, DAN MAY BE DOWN BUT HE'S NOT *OUT*--
--NOT IF I HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY ABOUT IT


I'LL BE KEEPING IN TOUCH

D WARE 707
THERE'S THE LOW LIFE
HEY, SLEAZOID--!


I KNOW WHAT YOU ARE-- I KNOW WHAT YOU SELL-- I KNOW WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO DAN BRODY!
BRODY BRODY
SORRY, ACE. THE NAME DOESN'T RING A BELL.

LISTEN, YOU PIECE OF FILTH
I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY LIVES YOU'VE RUINED WITH THE JUNK YOU PEDDLE ON YOUR CORNER
BUT GET THIS STRAIGHT--

YOU WON'T BE ADDING DAN BRODY'S LIFE TO THAT LIST YOU'VE BEEN HIM FOR THE LAST TIME.
MAYBE SO-- BUT THAT'S NOT UP TO YOU OR ME, KID--

...IS IT?
I HATE TO AGREE WITH HIS KIND BUT HE'S GOT A POINT!
I'VE GOT TO FIND A WAY TO MAKE DAN REALIZE HE CAN SURVIVE WITHOUT THIS DIRTBAG...

DEVLIN, DEVLIN! WHERE THE DEVIL ARE YOU? THIS IS YOUR CORNER--
WHY AREN'T YOU IN YOUR CORNER? WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO NOW?

UPPERS - GOTTA GET SOME UPPERS BEFORE I PASS OUT!

MY FRIEND MITCH ACROSS TOWN-- HE MIGHT HAVE A STASH OF WHAT I NEED.
I'LL CUT ACROSS THE PARK..

WASTED...
I FEEL... SOOO. WASTED
AT THIS RATE
I'LL NEVER MAKE MITCH'S
NEVER
MAKE..
MITCH'SSS
WHEW!
OFF YOUR AFT, BRODY--
--THIS IS NO TIME TO BE CATCHING A FEW EXTRA Z'S
THE CAPTAIN IS DEPENDING ON ME TO TO.
WAIT A MINUTE
WHERE'S THE REST OF THE LANDING PARTY?
EYAHHHH!
OF ALL THE PLACES TO WAKE UP-- A BED OF ALIEN PLANT-LIFE--
HUNGRY ALIEN PLANT-LIFE--

ZZZZTTTT
DON'T PANIC, ENSIGN--
--I'LL GET YOU OUT OF THERE IN ONE PIECE!
CAPTAIN!
AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU!
I'M SORRY SIR--I-I DON'T KNOW HOW I FELL ASLEEP ON THE JOB.
LATER ENSIGN. ALL THAT MATTERS IS YOU'RE ALL RIGHT!
THE OTHERS, SIR--WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM?
THEY GOT A HOLD OF THEM, BRODY! MEET THE HOSTILE ANIMAL LIFE FORMS THAT RUN RAMPANT ALL OVER THIS WORLD!
YEOWWWW!
AND I THOUGHT THE PLANT LIFE HERE WAS A REAL GROSS-OUT!
I WAS THE ONLY MEMBER OF THE LANDING PARTY TO SURVIVE THEIR FIRST ATTACK! STEEL YOURSELF, ENSIGN. SHOOT TO KILL ON MY COMMAND!
READY WHEN YOU ARE, SIR!

AT LEAST WE'RE HOLDING OUR OWN! SO FAR OUR BLASTS ARE HOLDING THE MONSTERS *BACK!*

THAT'S WHAT *WORRIES* ME, SON!

AT *THIS* SETTING THE *HEAT* FROM OUR BLASTERS SHOULD BE *VAPORIZING* THEM ON CONTACT!

LOOK, SIR!

SOMETHING'S HAPPENING--!

THEY'RE NOT BURNING--

--THEY'RE CHANGING!

BY SIRIUS! NOW THEY'VE BECOME CREATURES OF LIVING FIRE!

SIR, THEY'RE LINKING UP!

WE'RE SURROUNDED BY F-FLAMES EVERYWHERE! WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO NOW, SIR?

WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO?

GET A GRIP ON YOURSELF, SON! DON'T PANIC--I'LL PULL YOU OUT!
TAKE MY HAND--AND WE'LL GET THROUGH THIS TOGETHER!
ON MY SIGNAL.
...NOW!!!
GET OUT OF HERE WHILE YOU STILL CAN, CAPTAIN!
THERE'S NO WAY TO SAVE ME!
NO! I WON'T GIVE UP ON YOU!
I WON'T--
--GIVE--
UHHH
CAPTAI--
DAD!!!
CONGRATULATIONS
REALIZED
FATHER
YOU!
THE INTRUDER ALIEN WHO BOARDED OUR SHIP! BUT... WHO ARE YOU?!

YOU CAN CALL ME NIGHTMASK!
YOU'RE NOT FINISHED YET-- NOT IF YOU DON'T GIVE UP!
NOT IF YOU'RE WILLING TO FIGHT BACK!
YOU HAVE NO PLACE HERE, INTRUDER!
YOU DO NOT BELONG ON THIS WORLD!
UH OH
IF I NEEDED ANY MORE PROOF THAT DANNY'S DEPENDENCE ON DRUGS HAS SAPPED HIS WILL-- HIS VERY WILL TO SURVIVE...
THOSE MONSTERS AREN'T IT!
HIS SUBCONSCIOUS HAS CREATED THEM TO STOP ME BEFORE I CAN TRY TO HELP HIM!
IT'S NO GOOD, NIGHTMASK! I'M DEAD MEAT!
TRY TO SAVE YOURSELF AND GET AWAY!
EVEN IF I DO DESTROY THESE ALIEN FORMS, IT WON'T CHANGE DANNY'S PREDICAMENT!
I ALREADY KNOW HE'S NOT WILLING TO SAVE HIMSELF...
BUT LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I MAKE HISTORY REPEAT ITSELF--

--WHEN I USE MY *PARANORMAL POWERS* TO ALTER MY APPEARANCES!

NOW IT'S NOT *NIGHTMASK* DAN SEES IN TROUBLE--

NOW IT'S THE HELPLESS FOURTEEN YEAR OLD *FRESHMAN* HE FIRST *RESCUED* YEARS AGO!

"BUT INSTEAD OF HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS--"

K-KEITH?

WHAT ARE *YOU* DOING HERE?

"--*THIS* TIME THE *BULLIES* TRYING TO TEAR ME APART--"

KEITH, GET *AWAY* FROM THEM!

THEY'RE GONNA WIPE UP THE PLANET WITH YOU!

"--ARE HIS OWN *DEMONS*!"

NO THEY'RE *NOT*!

NO THEY'RE NOT!

HOLD ON, KID--

I'M COMING TO *PLAY*--

--AND I PLAY *ROUGH*!!

IT *WORKED*! AND NOW THAT *KEITH REMSEN* HAS STARTED THE BALL ROLLING--

SCREEEEE

--IT'S TIME FOR NIGHTMASK TO CARRY THE BALL HOME!
APPRECIATE THE ASSIST, ENSIGN BRODY!
DON'T MENTION IT.
YOUR MISSION HERE IS CLEAR TO ME NOW, INTRUDER!
VALKOR!!
NEVERTHELESS, YOU HAVE FAILED! BRODY IS STILL MINE!
MINE TO DOMINATE--
I-IT'S TRUE, NIGHTMASK!
MINE TO ABUSE--
THERE'S NO WAY I CAN EVER ESCAPE HIM!
NO MATTER WHERE I RUN-- HE FINDS ME! I'M HIS SLAVE-- HIS HELPLESS SLAVE!
HE IS MINE TO DESTROY--
IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THAT WAY, DAN! YOU'VE FOUGHT HIM THIS FAR--
NOW GO THE DISTANCE!
YOU CAN DO IT, DAN!
VALKOR IS ONLY AS POWERFUL AS YOU DECIDE TO MAKE HIM!
HE'S NOTHING YOU CAN'T BEAT!
FOR THAT YOU SHALL PERISH HORRIBLY, INTRUDER!
OH GEEZ--!

VALKOR SHALL RENDER YOU--
I'D SAY YOUR RENDERING DAYS ARE BEHIND YOU, VALKOR.
YOU GOT THAT RIGHT, NIGHTMASK--
--BECAUSE I'M NOT GONNA LET YOU POUND THIS GEEK INTO GROUND ROUND ALONE!
WAY TO GO, DAN!
YOU KNOW, YOU WERE RIGHT--
HE WAS NOTHING--
--NOTHING I COULDN'T BEAT ALL ALONG--
WELL WHADDAYA KNOW! NOW THAT VALKOR'S HAD THE "MYSTIC JUICE" KNOCKED OUT OF HIM--
--TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AND TELL ME WHO YOU SEE, DAN.
YOU'RE RIGHT AGAIN! THAT FACE...I KNOW THAT FACE...
VALKOR, SCHMALKOR! HIS REAL NAME IS DEVLIN--AND THE AGONY HE INFLICTED ON YOU HE'S INFLICTED ON MANY OTHERS!
BUT YOU HAVE THE POWER NOW, DAN--THE POWER TO WIPE THIS LOW-LIFE OUT OF EXISTENCE!
YOUR EXISTENCE!
ZOOOSHH
R-RIGHT AGAIN! NOW THAT I'VE SEEN DEVLIN FOR WHAT HE REALLY IS--
--I CAN MAKE HIM HISTORY!
NIGHTMASK--WHOEVER YOU ARE, ALIEN--WHERE DO I BEGIN TO THANK YOU?
NIGHTMASK...?
KEITH...?
...KEITH, I DID LIKE YOU ASKED--I DIDN'T DISTURB YOUR NAP HERE ON MY COUCH.
BUT THE WAY YOU WERE THRASHING AROUND--IT LOOKED LIKE YOU WERE HAVING A NIGHTMARE!
THE NIGHTMARE'S OVER, MR. BRODY. FOR ME AND DAN.

ONE WEEK LATER...
YOU'RE STILL WELCOME TO STAY LONGER, KEITH.
YOU HEARD THE GUY, DAD--HE'S GOT A JOB TO DO AT THAT INSTITUTE BACK IN VIRGINIA.
AFRAID DAN'S RIGHT, SIR. BUT I'M PLANNING TO TAKE YOU UP ON THAT INVITATION FOR A RETURN VISIT!
Y'KNOW, I FEEL LIKE I'VE SAID THIS BEFORE... BUT WHERE DO I BEGIN TO THANK YOU?
BEFORE YOU SHOWED UP, DAD AND I WERE BARELY SPEAKING...
...AND I WAS PILL-POPPING MY LIFE AWAY, STRUNG-OUT ON UPPERS AND DOWNERS!
HEY, I'M NOT KIDDING MYSELF--STAYING CLEAN FOR ONE WEEK IS NO BIG DEAL...BUT IT'S A START!
GET YOUR LUDES...CRACK... COKE...RIGHT HERE, GENTLEMEN!
TRUE VALUE
MY COUNSELOR AT THE REHAB CENTER, HE'S CONVINCED I'M GONNA MAKE IT!
AND HE SAYS I'M LUCKY TO HAVE A FRIEND LIKE YOU... A FRIEND WHO CARED ENOUGH TO HELP!
LOOK WHO'S TALKING! YOU'RE ONLY THE GUY WHO SINGLE HANDEDLY HELPED ME GET THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL ALIVE!
DON'T STAY AWAY TOO LONG, YOU SKINNY RUNT.
AND DON'T GET SO BUSY WATCHING OUT FOR OTHERS AT THE INSTITUTE YOU FORGET TO WATCH OUT FOR YOURSELF, KEITH REMSEN.
NO STANDING BUS STOP
THE END